INNOCENT XII 1691-1700

A Letter from Pope Innocent the XII. to the Emperour, wherein He Indeavours to perſwade Him to a Peace; With His Imperial Majeſties anſwer. To which is ſubjoyned the Reſolutions of the Confederates in the preſent Conjuncture.

Done out of French.

MOST Beloved Son in Jeſus Chriſt; We greet you with Health and our Apoſtolical Benediction. When from this ſublime poſt, exalted almoſt to Heaven, in which as unworthy as we were of it, we are placed, We caſt our eyes upon ſo many faithfull People that are committed to Our Paſtoral Care; We are almoſt ready to expire with the exceſſive Grief and Melancholly we are affected with, at the view of all thoſe great calamities, to which they are expoſed by this Cruel War, which at preſent afflicts almoſt all Chriſtendom. And therefore being deeply concerned at the great and piercing clamours of ſo many Perſons thereby expoſed to Deſtruction; And being ſo very well aſſured of your Majeſties pious inclinations, and of the great deſire you have, to promote the advantage of the Chriſtian Common-wealth, We have reſolved to employ with your Majeſty, the ſame Prayer we continually, without ceaſing, addreſs to the Father of Mercies, *That it would pleaſe him to diſſipate thoſe dreadfull Storms from whence ſo many Evils proceed, and to make them give place to a ſucceeding Calm of Peace ſo much deſired.*

We hope that taking into your Conſideration, the greatneſs of our Sorrow, and having a careful regard to the Miſeries of ſo many poor People, and the dying groans of thoſe that are dayly ſlain in the War, you will be the more confirmed in the Inclination you have for peace, and that you labour to augment it. And certainly when you ſhall have made a ſerious Reflection upon the ungovernable Licenciouſneſs of Soldiers, and upon the contempt that ſort of Men have for Sacred things, and upon the loſs of ſo many Souls as we have juſt occaſion to fear. Conſiderations which wound us to the heart with grief, We cannot doubt; but ſuffering you to be ſwayed by the motion of your natural Piety, you will readily form a Deſign for the procuring the repoſe of ſo many ruined People, the Re-eſtabliſhment of Gods Service, and the Salvation of Souls: Moſt ſure it is you can in no juſter or fitter manner acknowledge thoſe benefits, which the Authour of all Good has ſo abundantly beſtowed upon your Majeſty's Sacred Perſon, than by Re-eſtabliſhing the Hereitage which the Lord Jeſus Chriſt left by his Teſtament to his Church, before he aſcended into Heaven.

Wherefore employ your whole endeavours, as far as in you lies, Moſt Beloved Son in Jeſus Chriſt, towards the eaſing of the Chriſtian Commonwealth from thoſe miſeries with which it is now afflicted; And propoſe for your aim, the Glory which they ſhall receive; who by procuring the Peace of that Common-wealth, ſhall benefit it with an unexpreſſible felicity, and the Applauſes of the People thereby Reſettled, who will never ceaſe to proclaim the juſt prizes of the Authours of their tranquility.

As for us, We will put in practice all that we can think of to facilitate to Your Majeſty, and to all the reſt of the Chriſtian Princes, the means of putting in execution a Work ſo uſeful and ſo advantageous.

In this Expectation, We moſt heartily give you our Apoſtolical Benediction, as an aſſured earneſt of our good will. Given at *Rome*, at the Church of St. *Marie Major*, under the Seal of the Fiſher, the 8th. of *February*, 1691. And in the firſt year of our Pontificat.

MARIUS SPINOLA.

The Emperours Answer to the Pope.

Most Holy Father,

YOUR Holinesses Letter dated the 8th. of last Month, has sufficiently informed Us of the cruel disturbances you are affected with, at the view of those many Evils which the Christian People is overwhelmed with by the War at present enkindled almost every where, and of your Holinesses care to moderate and calm the animosities raging between the several irritated Princes, and to dispose them to Peace and Concord. And indeed the calamities which the Christian Common-wealth suffers by this War so unjustly enterprised, together with those it is farther threatned with thereby, no less afflict Us than them do your Holiness.

But our comfort is, That God and our Conscience bear Us Witness, that the fault cannot be imputed to Us, since We took not up Arms, but when there was a necessity so to do, for the Defence of the Empire, and of the People committed to our Protection, against those who attacked them. The most inward thoughts of our Heart are so well known to your Holiness, by the long acquaintance and converse you have had formerly with Us, That you will easily believe, there could happen nothing more displeasing to Us, than to see the Love We naturally are byassed with for the Peace, and tranquillity of the Publick, to be continually disobliged, and forcibly turned towards the contrary extreem, by fresh injuries daily perpetrated against Us, and above all things by the Ambition and Malitious envy of *France*.

For the Respect which is universally granted to be due to the Publick Faith, and to Solemn Treaties, has not hitherto been of any force to bridle that Crown from violating them as often as they have been sworn to. And to pass under silence several other things, the Christian World with sighs beholds, and posterity with horrour will hear related, that it has been possible for a King Most Christian, to fix upon a resolution to stop the Rapid Course of our Victories over the Infidels, to break those Bands of Amity We had but a little before renewed with him, and to make a fresh War upon Us, just at the moment when trusting in the Faith of those Treaties so lately made with him, We lived in all manner of security, and to fill all places with Murthers, Rapines, and Burnings, before he was pleased to inform Us for what Reason he Renewed the War, and what just pretence We had given him for it. Certainly it must needs have been done upon this principal, That it was much more eligible to trample under foot all things both Divine and Humane, than for *France* to have lost the opportunity to extend her Limits to the *Rine-ward*, and to leave to Us and the rest of Christendom, the leisure necessary successfully to finish the War with the *Turks*, and to secure our Frontiers on that side.

And therefore the August Dignity with which We are invested, obliged us to make the best Alliances We could, to defend our selves and People against the Arms of the Most Christian King, and at the same time against the Enemies of the Christian Name, who by a shameful union Act in consort again Us. 'Tis true the principal Condition of the Alliance by which we are engaged to our Confedrates, is, that we shall not have power to hearken to any seperate Treaty of Peace, without first consulting of it conjoyntly with them; but as we can very well answer for them, that they no less desire than We, to see Peace Re-established in the Christian World, by the Reinforcement of the Articles of Pacification concluded at the *Pyrenean* and *Westphalian* Treaties, which have been violated by *France*. It will be necessary above all things, for your Holiness to employ all your best offices and that with the utmost efficacy you can, to induce the King of *France* to restore things to the State required by the Articles of those two Treaties, as he himself testifies to be inclin'd to do.

If

If Your Holineſs can obtain from that Prince a thing ſo juſt, We will not be wanting on our ſide, to uſe Our utmoſt endeavours, that the Pious Intentions of your Holineſs for the good of Chriſtendom, and the offer of your Paternal Care and good Offices for the advancement of Peace, which are to Us moſt acceptable, may be embraced by Our Allies, and produce their deſired effect. This is what We thought Our duty to Anſwer to your Holineſſes Letter, which was ſo pleaſing to Us, and which We have accordingly done, with all due reſpect to Your Holineſs; Whom We pray God long to preſerve both for the good of the Church in General, and Our own in Particular.

At Vienna, *the 20th. of March.* 1691.

The Reſolution taken by the Confederate Princes, and other Allied Powers, in Relation to France.

HAVING Reſolv'd to make this Year, a Deſcent into *France*, that by ſo attacking Our Common Enemy where Our efforts may be moſt ſenſibly felt, We may the more eaſily Reduce him to Reaſon: In order thereunto, We firſt, all Solemnly Swear, and Proteſt before God, That We will make no Peace with *Lewis* the Fourteenth, but upon the conditions Stipulated by the Articles of the *Pyrenean*, and *Weſtphalian* Treaties which have been violated by *France*, and upon thoſe other agreements which We have hereunto Subjoyned, which tho' they be partly the Fundamental Rights of the *French* Nation, and partly priviledges confirm'd by the moſt ſolemn Edicts have been with no leſs violence and injuſtice infring'd.

I Till the General Eſtates of the Kingdom be reſtored to their Ancient Liberties, Power, and Share in the Legiſlative and ſuprem Power; and till both the Clergy, Nobility, and Third Eſtate be Reinſtated in all their former Legal priviledges; And till there be good proviſion made, that all Kings of *France* in time to come, ſhall be obliged to convoke the ſaid Eſtates, when they ſhall need money for any Publick concerns, and ſhall have no power, in any manner, or upon any pretence whatſoever, to raiſe any Taxes, or any ſort of Impoſts without their Conſent.

II. Till the ſeveral Courts of Parliament in the Kingdom be reinſtated into that ſufficient and Legal authority with which they were primarily inveſted, That ſo without being awed by any check from an arbitrary Power, or being obſtructed by the corruptions ordinarily ariſing from undue and illegal promotions to thoſe high Poſts of Judicature, they may be both able, and well inclined to do juſtice indifferently to all Parties.

III. Till all the Cities of the Kingdom be reſtored to their old Charters and Priviledges, and to the Revenues aſſigned for their ſupport and the Publick good of their ſeveral Corporations which have been ſo Inhumanly, and unjuſtly Raviſhed from Them.

IV. Till all thoſe Swarms of *Caterpillers* of Monopoliſts, pernicious Publicans, and Farmers of the Royal Revenues, and other oppreſſed undertakers be Removed, and all the illegal and new invented Charges and Taxes be taken off, as in particular, the Irregular Lodging and Quartering both of Courtiers and Soldiers, the exactions for Winter-quarters, the ſalaries of Governours, and Multitude of Sham Debts and private buſineſſes of the Crown, unneceſſarily and without authority charged upon particular Perſons, Towns, or Cities, and which enter not into the State or Accounts of the publick Revenues; of Extraordinary exciſes upon Wine, Cider, and other Liquors, the *Gabelle* upon Corn, and Flour, upon Hoofed Beaſts, and Salt, the unreaſonable and unexampled impoſts upon the Marks of Paper, Money, and all Utenſils, or Movables made of Metal, upon Hats, Silk-ſtockings, Wooll, and Woollen Manufactures, Shoes,

Shoes, Slippers, Wooden Shoes, all sorts of Linnen, and Perriwigs; as also upon Tobaco, Coffee, Tea, Chocolate, &c. upon all Manufactures of Silk, and upon all the Estates and Goods of Noble or Gentlemen every five Years, the Tax of the *Franc Fifis*, and several other oppressive exactions upon the Buyers and Sellers, or Morgagers of Lands, Houses, &c. and upon the Officers of the Courts of Judicature, and of the Treasury and Exchequer; of the Injurious, and Arbitrary Retrenchment of Wages, Raising or Lowering the value, and debasing the purity of Mony and Coin. and unjust Reunion to the Crown-Lands, and possession long enjoyed by great and deserving Families, upon Dispotical pretences, and besides an infinite many other new and unheard exactions; of the strange impositions upon Marriages, Christnings, Buryings, and Bastards, &c. and to conclude all in a Word: Till the Revenues of the Crown be Fixed, and Reduced within such certain and moderate Bounds as shall seem most Requisite to the wisdom of the General Estates when Conven'd and good provission be made that no succeeding French Monarchs shall ever pass those bounds.

V. Till he has Rendred to all the Protestants of his Kingdoms the Estates, Effects, and Liberties they were seised of by vertue of the Edict of *Nants*, and all other priviledges they injoyed thereby according to the true meaning, and to the full extent of the said Edict: And till for their future security both in their Civil, and Religious Rights and Capacities, according to the meaning of the said Edict, the said French King shall have deliver'd some sufficient cautionary Towns to be held and fortified by those Protestant Allies that shall be made Guardians or Conservators of the Treaty to be agreed upon.

VI. And Lastly We Declare, as in the sight of God, That in these our just attempts, We are not actuated by any hatred or animosity against the French Nation, nor by any ambitious designs to Conquer or Seise on any of the Antient and Lawful Dominions of *France*, or to dismember that Monarchy of any of the Provinces justly belonging to it, but that Our ultimate aim is only to repress that exhorbitant Power whereby that Crown has been inabled hitherto to oppress its own Subjects, and Threaten the Liberty of all Europe besides; And that We advance towards the Frontiers of *France*, with as hearty an intention to Right the wrongs of its Subjects, as those of Our own people, esteeming the reestablishment of their just and antient Liberties, to be the best Bulwark of Our own, against Our and their Common Oppressor; And that therefore We do friendly and heartily invite them to come in to Us, and to joyn their Arms and other assistance with Us. towards their Deliverance, assuring them We will treat them as Our best friends, and will take care to preserve their Persons, Towns, Lands, and all that shall concern them as if they were our own, But at the same time, We have thought fit also to Declare to all that shall not comply with Our invitations, and assistances intended for their Common good, That We shall Distinguish them for Enemies of their Country, and of all sort of Christianity, and Humanity, and as Barbarous wretches that have abetted, and approv'd all the persecutions, Burnings, Desolations and other Vexations which have been committed by those of their Nation both within and without *France*, and shall make them feel without mercy those pains which their inhumane Countrey-men have made so many thousands of miserable people suffer.

And We have thought fit to make Publick this Our Declaration, that all the World might know the sincerity of Our Resolutions, and particularly those of the French Nation, which groan under the intolerable oppression of the present Government there, and who with the loss of their Liberty, have redoubl'd their desires of Recovering it again, that they may be inform'd to whom, and with what confidence and assurance they may apply themselves, in this great opportunity offer'd them by the Just and Almighty God, to Regain their antient freedom and priviledges which have been so long and so cruelly extorted and detained from them.

FINIS.

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